

**Minutes of a Meeting of the Performance
and Finance Scrutiny Committee held at
Council Chamber, Surrey Heath House,
Knoll Road, Camberley, GU15 3HD on 4
July 2018**

- + Cllr Katia Malcaus Cooper (Chairman)
- + Cllr Darryl Ratiram (Vice Chairman)

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| + Cllr David Allen | + Cllr Robin Perry |
| + Cllr Bill Chapman | + Cllr Chris Pitt |
| + Cllr Edward Hawkins | Cllr Joanne Potter |
| + Cllr Ruth Hutchinson | Cllr Ian Sams |
| + Cllr Paul Ilnicki | + Cllr Wynne Price |
| + Cllr David Lewis | - Cllr Victoria Wheeler |
| - Cllr Max Nelson | + Cllr Valerie White |

- + Present
- Apologies for absence presented

Substitutes: Councillor Hutchinson for Councillor Wheeler

Members in Attendance: Councillor Vivienne Chapman
Councillor Paul Deach
Councillor Charlotte Morley

Officers Present: Adrian Flynn, Chief Accountant
Julia Hutley-Savage, Principal Lawyer
Louise Livingston, Executive Head: Transformation
Kelvin Menon, Executive Head: Finance
Tim Pashen, Executive Head, Community
Richard Payne, Executive Head: Corporate

1/PF Minutes of Previous Meeting

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Performance and Finance Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 21st March 2018 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

2/PF End of Year Performance Report 2017/18

The Committee considered the Council's Annual Performance Report. The report summarised the performance and achievements of the Council against its stated objectives, priorities and success measures at the end of the 2017/18 Municipal Year.

Key achievements during 2017/18 included: work to refurbish and rebrand The Square shopping centre, securing planning permission to redevelop Ashwood House, starting the tendering process for the regeneration of the Arena Leisure Centre, publishing the Local Plan Issues and Options Report for public consultation, refurbishment of the Windle Valley Day Centre and the introduction of a new waste collection contract in partnership with Woking, Elmbridge and Mole Valley Councils.

Arising from Members' questions and comments the following points were noted:

- There had been little investment in The Square prior to the Council's acquisition. The Council's refurbishment plans were proving to be a key part of the Council's plans to attract new retailers to the centre and encourage existing retailers to stay.
- The difficult retail climate had been acknowledged by the Council. The Council's acquisition of key town centre properties meant that it was ideally placed to control the offer provided and enhance visitor experience.
- The consultants managing The Square were actively promoting the centre to retailers in line with an agreed retail strategy.
- It was confirmed that the Local Plan Issues and Options Consultation was currently accessible directly from the home page of the Council's website.
- It was confirmed that members would be provided with a full update on the refurbishment of Camberley High Street as part of the development works.
- It was requested that the Committee be given the opportunity to comment on plans for the development of a replacement for the Arena Leisure Centre. It was noted that the Portfolio that included leisure would be considered at the Committee's meeting in September.
- Members commended the video produced to highlight the Council's key achievements over the past year. It was agreed that the video would be made available publically.

The Committee noted the report.

3/PF End of Year Finance Report 2017/18

The Committee considered a report that provided a high level view of the Council's financial performance during the 2017/18 financial year.

It was reported that the Council had had a successful year with controlled spending. Whilst additional income had been generated in many service areas there were some areas where performance had not met targets. Notwithstanding this the level of overall subsidy provided had fallen and work was taking place to reduce subsidies further.

At the end of the 2017/18 financial year £4.6million had been spent on capital expenditure of which £3.2million had been spent on property acquisitions and the refurbishment of The Square shopping centre. The Council had investments of £14million a variety of banks, building societies and funds and £119million had been borrowed to fund property acquisitions.

Arising from Members' questions and comments the following points were noted:

- Lack of resources had meant that the Kevin Cantlon Shop Front Improvement Scheme had not been as widely promoted as the Council would have liked. Promotion of the scheme would form part of the newly appoint Economic Development Officer's remit.
- Camberley Theatre's income had not met expectation however costs were tightly controlled and the subsidy required by the theatre was being reduced year on year. It was stressed that the Council had made a commitment to having a theatre in Camberley and that the majority of local authority owned theatres required subsidising.
- The fall in income from car parks was attributed to a combination of increased business rates and a drop in the number of people using the car parks compared to previous years. The 4% drop in users was consistent with other town centres across the country.

- The Council had lodged an appeal over the increase in business rates applied to car parks with the Valuation Office. The outcome of the appeal was awaited.
- The large variance in the Homelessness budget was attributed to grants having been received late in the financial year. The funding received would all be spent during the current financial year.
- £100,000 had been allocated to the procurement work associated with the development of a new leisure centre. The money would be spent in phases with £11,000 having been spent to date; the remaining £89,000 would be carried forward to pay for subsequent procurement work.

The Committee noted the report.

4/PF Portfolio Holder Update: Special Projects

Councillor Morley gave an update in respect of the work that she had undertaken during the 2017/18 municipal year in her capacity as Portfolio Holder: Special Projects.

The Committee was informed that the portfolio had covered a wide ranging remit that included Heathrow Airport; railway infrastructure, and the new franchise operator and liaison with Surrey County Council, particularly in relation to infrastructure matters.

Heathrow Airport

Councillor Morley informed the Committee that she represented the Council on the Heathrow Community Engagement Board and, in her capacity as Portfolio Holder, provided responses to consultations on the expansion of Heathrow Airport and the redesign of the UK's flightpaths.

A response to Heathrow Airports Noise Plan had also been submitted on behalf of the Council. It was agreed that a copy of the response would be circulated to the Committee.

Rail Franchise

Responses had also been provided on a proposed new train timetable. As a result of the consultation, the rail franchise holder had revisited the franchise agreement and reinstated the London Waterloo Camberley through train and agreed that an additional train would be provided via Ash Vale to coincide with the extended rush hour.

The lack of disabled access at Ash Vale Railway Station was acknowledged however travel to London via Ascot remained an option and transit times at Ascot had been included as part of the consultation.

Surrey Road Infrastructure

Liaison with Surrey County Council had resulted in an agreement to commit additional resources to the Meadows Gyratory Improvement works in order that as much work as possible was done overnight in order to minimise disruption.

Esso Aviation Fuel Pipeline Renewal

Esso plans to renew its Aviation Fuel Pipeline had been subject to consultation. Although the final route around the gravel pits in Frimley was still being determined the route of the new pipeline would avoid both Frimley Park Hospital and the Chobham Common SSI.

It was acknowledged that linking Farnborough Airport to the new fuel pipeline would reduce the number of heavy goods vehicles on the road in the surrounding area and the matter and been raised with the project team.

The Committee thanked Councillor Morley for her update.

5/PF Performance and Finance Scrutiny Committee Work Programme

The Committee considered a report setting out a proposed work programme for the 2018/19 Municipal Year.

It was noted that the work programme agreed by the Committee at their previous meeting had been amended to reflect changes to the Executive Portfolios. It was agreed that the following additional items would be added to the work programme:

- Meeting 5th December 2018 – Half Yearly Performance Report
- Meeting 20th March 2019 – Annual Plan 2019/20

It was acknowledged that the changes to the Executive Portfolios could impact on the length of meetings. It was agreed that the work programme would be kept under review and additional meetings would be scheduled if required.

RESOLVED that, subject to the addition of the agenda items above, the proposed Work Programme, as set out in Annex B of the report, would be approved.

6/PF Exclusion of Public and Press

RESOLVED that pursuant to Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended, members of the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the consideration of Item 9 which involves the likely disclosure of exempt information under the following category of Schedule 12A of that Act:

3. Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

7/PF Major Property Acquisitions

The Committee received a report providing an update on the Council's major property acquisitions.

The Council's investments had been made in line with the Council's key priorities: Place, town centre properties acquired with the primary purpose of supporting the regeneration of Camberley town Centre, and Prosperity, properties acquired in order to support economic development in the borough through the retention of key employment sites.

It was noted that the redevelopment of the London Road Block Development would be carried out in accordance with by EU Procurement guidelines. Updates would be given to members as work progressed.

The Committee was informed that following the granting of a Company Voluntary Arrangement (CVA) that earmarked the Camberley branch of House of Fraser for closure the Council was working with House of Fraser to try and identify a way of keeping the

store open. However it was stressed that the CVA appeal period had not yet closed and there was a significant probability that the CVA could be challenged by landlords.

The Committee noted the report.

Chairman